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UNCLAS ADDIS ABABA 002122

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED: DARFUR - SECURITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION ON UN PEACEKEEPING

REF: STATE 123408

¶1. DCM delivered reftel demarche to Ambassador Sahlework Zewde, Director of African Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on July 31. Responding that an October 1 date for the transition of AMIS to the UN would not be easy, Ambassador Sahlework raised the concerns of Sudan's non-acceptance of rehutting; the difficulty of implementing the DPA, particularly with regard to the non-signatories who have Eritrean support; and the fact that funds raised from the pledging conference are sufficient to take AMIS through December 2006. DCM emphasized that given the deteriorating security situation on the ground, an early transition to an UNMIS force with a strong mandate is required.

¶2. Ambassador Huddleston also delivered the demarche during an August 1 meeting with African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) representatives PSC Director Geofrey Mugumya, Head of the African Standby Force Maj General Ishaya Isah Hassan, Technical Advisor Dr. Aim Kamubudzi, and Conflict Management Director El-Ghassim Wane. Ambassador Huddleston emphasized that the worsening humanitarian situation in Darfur at this point, and commended the AU on their work in Sudan and urged full AU support for turning over AMIS to the UN by October 1st. What is needed now, she said, is a stronger, more sustainable UN force.

¶3. Wane replied that the June 27 PSC meeting in Banjul endorsed a UN transition on October 1, and that from the AA perspective, the sooner the transition happens the better. He admitted that the AU is frustrated by the Government of Sudan's reluctance to allow an UNMIS mission in Darfur as well as the UN stated timeframe of a January 1, 2007, transition. Wane said that if AMIS is expected to continue until December 31, the AU will need more financial support from the international community. The PSC will most likely convene in early September to discuss 1) a timeline outlining when the current funding will deplete (Wane speculated that because of the donor pledging conference AMIS could possibly fund troops until mid-October); and 2) the willingness of the GOS to accept UNMIS in Darfur. Wane outlined possible risks if the AMIS were to leave Sudan without a solid UNMIS in place: current initiatives could unravel; massive numbers of IDPs could be on the run; and UNMIS may have to begin a peace keeping operation from scratch.

¶5. Speaking candidly, Wane said that his personal worry was that the transition will take longer than predicted because of the GOS reluctance and the current UN and international community preoccupation with the situation in Lebanon. He said that Sudan does not want an expanded role for the UN out of fear that it will be "a puppet" for the U.S. and Israel. Wane added that he personally believes the AU did not engage the GOS enough on its resistance to the AMIS transition to UNMIS. He reflected that if the AU can secure funding for six months and mobilize technical support from the UN and NATO, this would buy time to engage politically with Sudan.

¶6. Ambassador Huddleston responded that AMIS must continue until the transfer to UNMIS because no one wants to see the situation worsen. To that end, she stated, the reason the U.S. is pushing for an October 1 transition is to put pressure on the UN and the GOS to create a smooth and fast UN transition. She pointed out and Wane argeed that rehatting AMIS would allow the UN to meet the time table of October.

HUDDLESTON